Revelation of Plutonium diaster in USSR

4608. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the greatest plutonium disaster in USSR was not revealed to the public causing great health hazards to the uninformed as reported by the Economic Times of the 3rd June, 1992; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to assure that such accidents anywhere in the world and the country are factually reported to the people as a right to information?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) We have seen the report which appeared in "The Economic Times" of 8th June, 1992. Information about this incident was made known to scientists worldover, after 1988 and detailed presentation by USSR scientists were made at conferences/symposia in 1990-91. Our information is based on press reports or scientific symposia. We have no jurisdiction to investigate the matter.

(b) International Atomic Energy Agency has introduced an "incident reporting system" since 1988 and under this the member States report to IAEA incidents in civil nuclear facilities even though they may be minor in nature and may not involve any release of radioactive materials. All countries including the erstwhile Soviet Union have been sending reports to IAEA under this programme. Similarly, IAEA has introduced this year after a trial run of one year an "international nuclear event scale (INES)" for nuclear power reactors whereby reported incidents are put on a scale of severity (based on onsite and offside consequences, if any) ranging from 0 to 7, 7 being accident of Chernobyl type and O meaning only a degradation of safety system without any safety consequences. Incidents or accidents are then informed to the public indicating the scale and its significance. It may be noted that the recent incident at a nuclear power plant near Leningrad was similarly informed to public by IAEA. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) which is an independent body entrusted with the task of regulating the safety aspects of nuclear facilities in India actively participates in the above system. Through sophisticated global monitoring systems in position, now even if an accident of radiological consequences is not revealed by the country concerned, it would be known through the monitoring systems of the other countries. In fact, when the Chernobyl accident happened, before the erstwhile Soviet Union revealed it, the other countries came to know of it through their monitoring systems and made it public.

Decline in production of Fertilizers

4609. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total fertilizer production during April, 1992 at 6.65 lakh tonnes was 20 per cent lower than the 6.77 lakh tonnes produced during April, 1991 and that in the case of phosphatic fertilisers it was from 78 per cent to 68 per cent during this period; Financial Express issue 'Investment Week' July 27, August 2, 1992 refers;

(b) if so, the reasons for decline;

(c) whether Government have drawn up any list of foreign companies from which our fertiliser units can choose technology, if so, the details thereof country-wise;

(d) what is the overall production target set for 1992-93 as against the actual production of 98.2 lakh tonnes of 1991-92; and

(e) by when report of the Committee on revised price and subsidy structure for fertilisers expected to be placed before Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) The total fertilizer production during April, 1992 at 6.65 lakh tonnes in terms of nutrients was lower only by 0.34 per cent than the production of 6.67 lakh tonnes during April, 1991. In case of phosphatic fertilizers, the production during the corresponding period was 1.6 lakh tonnes and 1.78 lakh tonnes, respectively.

The capacity utilisation in the case of phosphatic fertilizers showed a drop of 10 per cent in April, 1992 compared to April, 1991.

(b) The major reasons for shortfall in production during April, 1992 were equipment problems/maintenance job in a number of fertilizer units, shortage of phosphoric acid in all the DAP plants and liquidity problem faced by SSP units.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The target fixed for production of fertilizers during 1992-93 is 104.50 lakh MT in terms of nutrients as against the actual production of 98.63 lakh MT during 1991-92.

(e) The term of the Parliamentary Committee constituted to go into various aspects of fertilizer pricing and subsidy has been extended till the last day of the current Parliament Session.

Falling to perform duty by Development Commissioner (PI)

4610 SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Development Commissioner (PI) who is incharge of recovery into the DPEA has failed to recover even a single penny during 1991-92 and 1992-93 so far;

(b) if so, the details of recovery made;

(c) whether it is a fact that he has amassed huge fortune of tangible and intangible assets at Ghaziabad, Delhi and several other towns;

(d) if so, what are the details of reported and unreported assets;

(e) whether it is a fact that he has suppressed all the complaints against himself and his predecessor who is presently having charge of Ghaziabad Development Authority;

(f) what are the details of all the complaints received and what is present position of each; and

(g) whether any of these complaints investigated so far, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) and (b) During the years 1991-92 and 1992-93 so far, no amount has been recovered in the DPEA account. The responsibility of such recovery is not that of any single officer.

(c) and (d) No report about any of the officers, dealing with DPEA recoveries in 1991-92 and 1992-93 having amassed huge fortune of tangible and intangible assets has come to our notice.

(e) to (g) Complaints received against officers of this Department are examined in accordance with the established rules and procedure.